

The Innovative Techniques Working Group

A small working group has been formed to provide a forum where ideas for new/improved data acquisition and processing techniques can be shared and vetted. The Innovative Techniques Working Group (ITWG) was formed because often times a new look at an old problem can result in a creative solution to improve operation and performance (e.g., AVSET, Mode Selection Function, etc.). Even though the membership is intentionally limited, the ITWG has the support of the WSR-88D stakeholder agencies to recruit temporary expert members to address specific problems/topics.

To identify operational problem areas, the ITWG will review comments included on WSR-88D questionnaire responses, Hotline call tickets, and inquiries/suggestions received via the WSR-88D feedback system. Initial topics for discussion include reducing Volume Coverage Pattern (VCP) update times, more frequent low-level updates, optimizing pulse repetition frequency (PRF) selection, reviewing VCP specifications, and other issues that may improve data availability and/or quality.

The ITWG will focus on operational problems with the goal of finding creative methodologies and implementing field-deployable solutions. (See the SAILS article in this publication for a look at the first ITWG project.) Members will leverage existing agency processes (e.g., TAC, SREC, OSIP, etc.) to reduce the time required to move from the drawing board to deployment.

Once an idea is fleshed out and deemed viable by the ITWG, a formal project will be initiated using the standard WSR-88D change process. Project information and updates will

be posted on the Radar Operations Center web page under the “New Radar Technology” banner (<http://www.roc.noaa.gov/WSR88D/NewRadarTechnology/NewTechDefault.aspx>). In addition, articles outlining ongoing and planned proposals will be published in future editions of *NEXRAD Now*.

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Information “Tid Bits” for Improved WSR-88D Operations

These “tid bits” on operational topics are too short for separate articles. We hope you will find this information beneficial.

New WSR-88D in Western Washington State Operational

On 29 September 2011, Senator Cantwell, presided over the Dedication Ceremony of the new WSR-88D, KLGX, Langley Hill, WA. The radar has been modified with the Dual Polarization technology. The key WSR-88D assets for this project (pedestal, transmitter, and Radar Data Acquisition (RDA)) were transferred to the National Weather Service (NWS) from the Keesler AFB, MS maintenance training facility. This enabled cost savings of the installation; operations and maintenance; and ease of keeping the radar on the same upgrade path as the rest of the WSR-88D network. The installation was complete one year earlier than the initial plan to buy a commercial S-Band Doppler and Dual Polarization radar to meet WSR-88D specifications/requirements.

WSR-88D Level II Archive Data Users and Usage

A question frequently received at the Radar Operations Center (ROC) is, “Does anyone use archived Level II data and how often?” This is a fair question because many people at field sites, the National Climatic Data Center (NCDC), the ROC, Top Tier sites, NWS HQ, Unidata and others have invested a lot of time and effort to advance the data collection of these data. In addition, the NWS NEXRAD Program has

invested funding for the data collection, distribution, and archive. The following summaries are monthly averages for 2011.

User Email Domain	
.gov	30%
.edu	24%
.mil	1%
Other	46%

Data Archive Usage	
#Requests	3,883
#Files Requested	274,548
GB FTP'd	5,750

Conducting Semi-Annual Unit Radar Committee (URC) Meetings? If Not, Now is a Great Time to Start



In the last issue of *NEXRAD Now* we reminded operators that Chapter 4 of the Memorandum of Agreement among the DOC, DoD, and DOT for Interagency Operation of the WSR-88D (<http://www.roc.noaa.gov/WSR88D/>) requires all WSR-88D sites with two or more NEXRAD agencies

connected must have semi-annual URC meetings, which can be conducted via phone. All but four overseas WSR-88Ds should have an active URC. As the installation of Dual Polarization technology continues (20 installed, 140 to go as of the end of 2011), coordination of the installation dates and the 12-day radar outage is essential. Also, it would be a great idea for sites to invite the maintenance staff of a TDWR in their coverage area to participate in the URC meetings. Please contact the WSR-88D Hotline with questions on how to start/restart your local WSR-88D URC. The Hotline will also gladly participate in future URC telecons to answer

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questions or address system-wide topics on the agenda.

WSR-88D Volume Coverage Pattern (VCP) Usage

In the last issue of *NEXRAD Now* we published graphs of monthly and annual VCP usage. Figure 1 is an update of the annual average VCP usage, which includes 2010 and 2011 informa-

tion. The ROC believes the steadily increasing use of VCPs 212 and 12 is a good sign that operators are recognizing the benefits of the faster updates and more scans at the lower elevation angles during severe weather and other situations.

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